

# Bahr Academy

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Bahr Academy is an independent Muslim girls' day school based in the Elswick area of Newcastle Upon Tyne. The school is owned by the Bahr Academy Trust. The school is currently registered for up to 27 female students aged from 11 to 16 years. It has applied to the Department for Education for an increase in numbers to 30 students. At present there are 24 students on roll and none of them have a statement of special educational needs or are learning English as an additional language. All students are British from a South Asian heritage. The school aims to:

'enable everyone to be confident individuals and recognise self-value and inner capability; to be students who interact with others to live safely and responsibly as good citizens, seeing it as their moral and religious duty to make a positive contribution to society.'

The school opened in September 2010 and this is its first inspection.

## Evaluation of the school

The school meets its aims by providing a good quality of education. The school's curriculum is satisfactory with good teaching and assessment which enables students to make good progress. The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and their behaviour is outstanding. The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is good and the school meets all the requirements for safeguarding. The school meets all the regulations for registration as an independent school.

## Quality of education

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum with a number of good aspects. There is planning to teach most subjects from the National Curriculum with additional provision for teaching about Islamic theology. There is planning for all the required areas of learning. There is a good curriculum policy in place which is supported by suitable schemes of work for all subjects. The school's planning and provision for

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

core subjects of English, mathematics, science is good. Facilities for practical work in science have been improved recently and to improve them further the school will shortly be using the facilities of another local school.

The curriculum for the school's Islamic theology programme includes: study of the Qur'an; *fiqh* (the practical aspects of Islamic life); *tajweed* (Qur'anic recitation) and the traditions of the prophet. This programme is a strength of the curriculum and is of good quality. In addition, the school offers a good quality modern foreign languages programme which includes Arabic and Urdu. The school effectively addresses the aesthetic needs of its students by offering them the opportunity to learn the Qur'anic recitation and *nasheeds* (Arabic and Islamic songs).

There is a good provision for students' personal, social and health education (PSHE) which is linked with school's Islamic studies programme. PSHE is effectively supported by the school's spiritual and pastoral programme. Some aspects of the curricular provision are less strong. The school is in the process of upgrading its provision for information and communication technology (ICT) by increasing the number of computers as the school's current ICT provision is only satisfactory. The provision for physical education (PE) is only satisfactory as it is limited to only one session per week. The school is actively developing its limited provision for extra-curricular activities and for visits.

There is a suitable careers programme which starts in Year 10. Arrangements are made for students in Year 11 to go on work experience placements with local mosque schools and community organisations. The students also have opportunities to take part in different activities related to their Islamic education, for example, by organising community events, delivering speeches at these events and attending other Islamic theology schools. Additional support is provided for those students who need extra help with their learning. There is a suitable policy for more able students to provide them with higher-level work. All of these students make good progress. The school is registered as an examination centre. Current Year 11 students and some able younger students will be entered for GCSE examination this coming academic year.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers use their professional skills well to plan and deliver their lessons. Medium-term plans are well thought out. Good quality lesson planning is in place, with clear learning outcomes which are shared with students at the start of lessons. Teachers take pupils' learning needs appropriately into account in their planning and give them the right level of work to match their abilities. Some use of made of setting arrangements by placing students with similar levels of ability in the same group. Teachers effectively ensure that their lessons link together different subject of the curriculum. Teachers employ varied methods and different activities such as role-play, games and group activities to make teaching and learning enjoyable and interesting. The pace is good in most lessons and expectations of students are high. Teachers make good use of resources

to support teaching and learning. There are sufficient resources to meet the learning needs of students.

Student-teacher relationships are very good. The school works as a family in which students respect their teachers and show respect to each other. Their behaviour in lessons is outstanding. They participate in their learning activities with interest and enjoy their lessons.

The progress of each student is assessed in all subjects each term. As a result, teachers know the extent of their students' progress very well and so set challenging targets for them. Students are clear about the objectives set for them. Marking is generally good but sometimes it provides only ticks without any helpful comments to tell students how to improve their work. As a result of the good teaching, the satisfactory curriculum and the effective support students receive, they make good progress and some are making rapid progress.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their behaviour is outstanding and reflects the school's Islamic ethos. Students expressed their loyalty to the school in meetings with inspectors and through their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. They attend regularly and there is no unauthorised absence. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning which show that they enjoy their education. The school promotes students' excellent behaviour and good moral development through assemblies, regular prayers and the PSHE programme which helps students to distinguish between right and wrong. All students are extremely polite and they courteously greet their teachers, fellow students and visitors. There is a suitable reward and sanction policy in place which is implemented consistently.

Students contribute to their school in different ways. There is an elected students' council which plays an active role in the school's daily business. Students vote to elect fellow students to represent their views on the school council. They have raised money for their school and different charities. Whole-school assemblies are held where students give talks on different topics and share their views with each other. Students clearly demonstrated their self-confidence during lessons and in meetings with inspectors.

The school, through its good provision for basic skills, careers advice and its provision for work placements, prepares students effectively for their future lives. The good links with other Muslim schools and with local organisations, for example, a local women's centre and girls' schools in Bradford and Lancaster, provide opportunities for students to broaden their horizons. The school has received visits from representatives from the health service, the fire service and the local council. Students learn about British institutions in English, history and other lessons and are well aware of current affairs. They are aware of their responsibilities as young people

in British society. Students learn about other cultures in their Islamic studies and citizenship programmes.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The provision for safeguarding the students' welfare, health and safety is good. All students feel safe. All the required policies and procedures are in place, including a safeguarding and safer recruitment policy and all staff, including school's designated officer, are trained at the required level. There is a health and safety risk assessment policy for the school and out-of-school activities which is effectively implemented. There is a first aid policy and first aid officers are trained at the required level. The school has a fire risk assessment in place, all fire-fighting equipment is regularly tested and regular fire drills are conducted.

The school encourages students to adopt healthy lifestyles by advising them to eat healthy food and to eat fruit at break times. Students are encouraged to take part in physical activities. Students are made aware of the dangers of drug abuse and smoking. The school has an anti-bullying policy which is effectively implemented. The school has submitted a three-year plan to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The school maintains attendance and admission registers which meet the regulations.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school has undertaken all the required checks to ensure that its staff and the proprietors are suitable to work with children. The school maintains a single central register which meets the regulations.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The school building is a safe and effective place for learning. It is well equipped with the required facilities for learning and is well maintained and decorated. There is a garden at the rear of the premises to provide for outdoor play and the school uses a local sport facility for physical education activities. There is suitable provision for students who may become ill.

## **Provision of information for parents**

The school meets all requirements by providing the necessary information to parents, carers and others through an up-to-date prospectus and the school's website. The school reports on students' progress annually to parents, carers and others. All of the parents express their support for the school in their responses to the questionnaire.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school has a complaints policy and set of procedures which meet all of the regulations. The school has taken steps to ensure that parents and carers are aware of these.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- continue to develop the provision for extra-curricular activities and outings for students
- increase the amount of time each week which is allocated for physical education
- ensure that teachers' marking consistently provides feedback to students on how they can improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			√	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils	√			

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Muslim girls day school
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2010
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-16 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	24
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	0
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,700
<b>Address of school</b>	72 Sceptre Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01912 731907
<b>Email address</b>	info@bahracademy.co.uk
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Muhammad Abdulmuheet
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Muhammad Abdulmuheet

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



29 September 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Bahr Academy URN 136258**

I am writing to thank you for the time you spent talking to me when I inspected your school recently.

I am pleased to tell you that your school provides you with good quality education.

I have found that good Islamic studies and basic skills provision with good teaching have enabled you to make good progress. You are clear about your targets and your teachers use the assessment information they collect about you to identify if you need extra help to make the progress you should in all your subjects. You told us how you enjoy your learning and feel happy. We were pleased by the number of spiritual and social activities in which you participate.

We have taken your views into account and I have asked the school to consider the following points for development:

- continue to develop the provision for extra-curricular activities and outings
- increase the amount of time each week which is allocated for physical education
- ensure teachers' marking consistently provides you with feedback on how to improve your work.

We enjoyed meeting you and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mohammad Ismail  
Lead Inspector